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THE HOOP-PETTICOAT.

AN

Heroi-comical Poem; in four Cantos.

Addreſs'd to the

LADIES of GREAT-BRITAIN.

By a young GENTLEMAN of *Oxford*.

----- Carmina non prius
Audita, Muſarum Sacerdos
Virginibus pluriſque canto. HOR.

115

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LONDON:

TO

Miſs *ARABELLA M——T.*

MADAM,

THE *Approbation You gave of the following Performance, when I was at Your Father's Villa laſt, was one of the chief Encouragements that prevailed upon me to make it Publick.*

The POEM *I now offer to Your Peruſal, claims Your eſpecial Regard and Protection. Your uncommon Abilities in the nice Art of Dreſs, and delicate*

Taſte,

have render'd You one of the most accomplished Mistresses of the Toilet; which are no inconsiderable Motives to induce Me to recommend it to Your Patronage.

For which Reasons I need no long Apology for addressing the following Lines to You. The Subject of the POEM *is entirely new, and the Manner in which the Author has treated it, is consistent with the established Rules of Poetry.*

But as this must be submitted to the Determination of the Reader, I shall only give myself the Satisfaction in assuring You, that

I

I am, MADAM,

With the utmost Respect,

Your greatest Admirer.

THE HOOP-PETTICOAT.

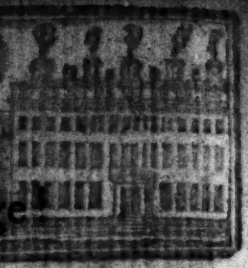
AN Heroi-comical Poem; in four Cantos.

Inſcribed to Miſs ARABELLA M——T.

CANTO I.

ACCEPT, ye Fair, the Tribute of a Muſe!
Whoſe Lays, the chaſteſt Veſtal may peruſe;
Inſpir'd by you, the Bard attempts to ſing,
And mounts exulting on a loftier Wing.

What Art divine the wond'rous Fabrick found,
That ſhields *Lucinda*, lovely Nymph, around,
Sing heav'nly Muſe! th' important Truth reveal!
Nor from our World the ſecret Cauſe conceal!



---Avaunt, ye ſnarling Critics of the Age!
Touch not with Hand profane the hallow'd Page!

To you, ye *Britiſh* fair! the Bard commends
His Lays, and on your Patronage depends:
If to his trifling Strains no Praiſe is due,
He deems it Victory to fall by you.

In that gay Seaſon, when delightful Show'rs
Call forth to Life the op'ning Buds and Flow'rs,
Lucinda faireſt of the Female Train,
For whom a thouſand Boſoms burn'd in vain,
Loſt to all Senſe of ev'ry Thing but Love,
Had ſought the Confines of a dark Alcove:
Penſive ſhe ſigh'd beneath the gloomy Shade,
That ſeem'd alone for ſlighted Lovers made.
So mourns in lonely Groves the cooing Dove
The tedious Abſence of her tender Love.

'Twas Night, and awful Silence reign'd around,
The Wind was hush'd, with ev'ry human Sound,
And *Cynthia*, pale-ey'd Empreſs of the Night,
Illum'd her proper Sphere with borrow'd Light;
In this ſad Hour, unheeded and alone,
In mournful Sort *Lucinda* made her Moan,
And doom'd, alas! to Love and to Deſpair,
In theſe ſad Accents thus renew'd her Care.

How long ſhall haughty Man our Sex diſdain?
Muſt all our ſyren Wiles be try'd in vain?
Ah! what avail our Ornaments and Arts,
Our boaſted Conqueſts o'er ten thouſand Hearts?
Have I, alas! theſe ſad Effects to prove,
Been nurs'd a Pupil in the School of Love?
Ev'n now *Lyſander* ſcorns my proffer'd Flame,
And lords it o'er me with injurious Claim:
For him the Suit of Thouſands I deny'd,
And us'd all elſe with Cruelty beſide.
Ah treach'rous baſe Deſerter of my Flame!
Falſe to my Hopes, and fatal to my Fame,
Say by what curſt Enchantment can'ſt thou prove
Deaf to all plighted Vows of former Love!
Muſt I, afflicting Thought! behold thee bleſs
Some happier Maid, that ſhall admire thee leſs?
Firſt let the op'ning Earth a Paſſage rend,
And let me to the peaceful Tomb deſcend!
What future Joys can Life's frail Being give,
Depriv'd of thee for whom alone I live?
Thus mourn'd the Fair all eloquent in Tears,
And to the pitying Gods unvail'd her Fears.
Mean while, commiſſion'd from the Realms above,
With eager Speed deſcends the Queen of Love.

Why mourns my charming Fair? the Goddeſs cries,
What mean thy ſadden'd Looks, why ſtream thy Eyes?
Whoſe beamy Luſtre once eclips'd the Day,
And far outſhone the light'ning's pointed Ray.
Whatever be the Cauſe, the Truth reveal!
Hide not that Anguiſh, which I know to heal!
My Charms th' Almighty Pow'rs of Heav'n can move,
And tame the ſavage Breaſt of Man to Love.
All vary'd Beings underneath the Sky,
That cleave the Flood, or thro' wide Æther fly,
With pleaſing Joy my ſov'reign Influence own,
And in my Pow'r the Queen of Love is known.
—Haſte then, O Nymph! with my Requeſt comply,
And to a Deity's Protection fly!
O ſay then! haſt thou ſeen a Belle more gay
Strut in the *Mall*, or bluſter at the Play,
Or has *Quadrille* ſwept all thy Stakes away?
Or ſay! does Love thy tender Thoughts employ?
Scarce full ſixteen, yet ripe for Bliſs and Joy.
Speak! let me ſhare the Anguiſh of thy Grief,
And hope from hence a Promiſe of Relief!
At length, emerging from profound Surprize,
The Heav'n-belov'd *Lucinda* thus replies:

What

What Need have I my Suff'rance to explain?
Well *Venus* knows the Fountain of my Pain.
Can the celeſtial Pow'rs, who all Things know,
Plead unconcern at mortal Bliſs or Woe?
Ah, *Venus!* I lament thy Empire loſt,
No more may Woman-kind their Triumphs boaſt;
Sunk are their Charms, and wonted Pow'r to pleaſe,
Can *Venus* bear Indignities like theſe?
If ſo---no longer muſt our Sex adore
Thy partial Sway, and own thy ſov'reign Pow'r!
No more ſhall ſuppliant *Cloe* bend her Knee,
Who now implores no Deity but thee!
No more muſt Incenſe from thy Altars riſe,
Nor offer'd Hecatombs perfume the Skies.
To whom the Goddeſs thus herſelf expreſs'd,
While Indignation labour'd in her Breaſt:
Blame not my Rule, leſt you repent too late,
Vain haughty Woman! think on *Helen*'s Fate.
Know! that my Will no Mortal dares controul,
Or ſhake the ſettl'd Purpoſe of my Soul!
Long ſince was *Albion* my peculiar Care,
A Guardian ever of her beauteous Fair:
All other Climates muſt to her ſubmit,
Fam'd much for Beauty, and as much for Wit.

From me their great Original they draw,
The plenteous Source, whence all these Bleſſings flow.
Muſt then these Beauties inſufficient prove
To tempt proud Man's obdurate Heart to Love?
Muſt ev'ry Mode that Artiſt can invent
To add new Charms, not make his Breaſt relent?
No --- *Venus* ſtill has more Reſerves in Store,
And Man again ſhall own her conqu'ring Pow'r.

A Place there is *, *Mycenia* call'd by Name,
A Climate foremoſt in the Liſt of Fame;
Where *Hercules*, if ancient Bards ſay true,
In bloody Fight the *Giants* overthrew.
Their Love and Pleaſure ſpread their wide Domain,
And Mirth and Freedom bleſs the happy Plain.
There *Venus* rules with abſolute Command,
And crowns with unmoleſted Peace the Land.
Its Natives, much renown'd for curious Arts,
Have ſpread their growing Fame to diſtant Parts:
There is the Source whence Modes for ever flow,
Modes which nor *France*, nor yet *Britannia* know.
Ev'n now of late they've rais'd with niceſt Care
A labour'd *Hoop* to ornament the Fair,

* Where the Hoop-Petticoat is ſaid firſt to be invented.

The

The vaſt Expanſe of whoſe enormous Size,
And wide Dimenſions would provoke Surprize.
This Gift, unleſs withſtood by *Jove's* Decree,
Lucinda! Venus conſecrates to thee,
A Gift which gazing Myriads ſhall admire,
And ſet like *Phaeton* the World on Fire.
When twice five Suns have run their deſtin'd Race,
Expect my Preſence at th' appointed Place.
I viſit now yon rolling Orbs on high,
And there convene the Synod of the Sky.
Mean while in ſportive Joys forget your Care,
The Park and Play-houſe ask your Preſence there!
Go then and mingle with the blith and gay,
An equal Trifle, and as vain as they.

No more the Goddeſs ſaid, but took her Flight
To the bleſt Manſions of eternal Light.
With Joy *Lucinda* hopes the golden Prize,
While ſtruggling Paſſions in her Boſom riſe:
Proud of Succeſs, the Nymph withdraws to Reſt,
And lulls aſleep each Tumult of her Breaſt.
Soon vaniſh'd ev'ry Thought of former Woes,
And guardian Sylphs prolong'd her ſoft Repoſe.
Now airy Dreams their ſportive Influence ſhed,
And Elves and Fairies hover'd round her Head.

While unconfin'd the roving Fancy ſtrays,
O'er craggy Mountains, and thro' pathleſs Ways;
Ten Thouſand odd Chimeras crowd her Brain,
Beaux, Dreſs, and paſt Intrigues, a medley Train,
And jarring Chaos and Confuſion reign.

CANTO II.

NOW to *Olympus'* tops the Queen of Love
Returning, ſeeks the Realms of mighty *Jove*;
High on his Throne th' Imperial Monarch ſate
Beneath a golden Canopy of State.
There open lay to his far-ſeeing Eye
Earth's various Beings underneath the Sky;
Whence preſcient he ſurveys th' Event of Things,
The Fate of Empire, and the Fall of Kings.
Exalted thus in Majeſty Divine,
Heav'n's mighty Monarch held his ſacred Shrine:
Peace, Love, and Harmony, his Thoughts divide,
And all his flaming Bolts are laid aſide;
No Thunders bellow, and no Lightnings fly,

Love's Queen, who now the golden Moment ſaw,
Approach'd her Sov'reign with ſubmiſſive Awe;
Then with falſe Smiles, and a deceitful Look,
To this Intent the fair Diſſembler ſpoke.
Hail, King of Gods and Men! whoſe wide Command,
Extends unlimited o'er Sea and Land;
Thy fixt Decrees th' immortal Pow'rs obey,
And all confeſs thy delegated Sway.
Grant then, O *Jove!* indulgent to my Pray'r!
A Gift in Favour of the *Britiſh* Fair.
Lucinda, Fáv'rite of all bounteous Heav'n,
To whom its beauties are profuſely giv'n,
Now penſive ſighs her tedious Hours away,
And ſpends in Grief the ſlowly-waning Day.
Ah, *Jove!* it ſuits not with her tender Years
To waſt her Youth in Miſery and Tears,
Youth the fair Spring of ſoft Deſires and Love,
When the glad Hours in ſportive Dalliance move.
Unhappy Nymph! I mourn thy Empire loſt,
And the fall'n Glories of *Britannia*'s Coaſt!
Short is th' uncertain Date of Beauty's Reign,
Lucinda, lovely Charmer, pleads in vain;
Weak is the Force of Love's all-conquering Dart
When Beauty's Charms are unſuſtain'd by Art.

To *Cyprus'* balmy Groves I now repair
To plan new beauteous Modes to please the Fair.
For her that labour'd Ornament I haste,
Admir'd by all *Myconia*'s Belles of Taste.
And soon the wond'rous Fabrick shall be wrought,
Unless great *Jove* suppress the rising Thought.
Here ceas'd the Queen: When, lo! with awful Nod,
Great *Jove* displays the Sanction of the God;
And now the Thund'rer with her Will complies,
But first convenes the Senate of the Skies;
To whom arising from his hallow'd Throne
Majestick, thus the Deity begun.
Ye Gods and Goddesses, attend the Tale!
While I the Purport of my Will reveal!
Long has the *Cyprian* Queen with Grief complain'd
Of lessen'd Pow'r, and Empire unsustain'd;
Ev'n now *Britannia* claims her tender Care,
The great Protectress of her matchless Fair;
Too oft has she their abject State deplor'd,
And kind Indulgence to her Suit implor'd;
For them the Goddess, studious to prepare
Th' invented Hoop, *Myconia*'s Females wear,
Exerts her Art, nor yet can *Jove* foresee
The Crime, if Heav'n should seal the just Decree.

Long in Suſpence the heav'nly Synod ſtood,
None dar'd oppoſe the Mandate of their God.
Pallas, at length, whoſe Breaſt with Fury burn'd,
Her Eyes on *Jove* with Indignation turn'd:
Can *Jove*, whoſe Attribute, the Virgin cries,
Is darling Truth, be thus deceiv'd by Lies?
Shall *Cyprus*' Queen, that Quinteſſence of Ill,
Make human Race ſubſervient to her Will?
Recal, O *Jove!* th' unlawful Grant in Time,
Can *Jove* be guilty of ſo great a Crime?
What more than Madneſs hath poſſeſs'd thy Mind,
Would'ſt thou augment the Wiles of Woman-kind?
As well you may inſtruct the Winds to blow,
And the rough boiſt'rous Ocean how to flow;
* Teach Snakes to bite, and rav'nous Wolves to prey,
And Birds of Air to wing the æthereal Way;
Sure all the ſecret Springs on which they move
Are known, and notic'd, by the Eye of *Jove*.
But if the Gods my Council ſhall diſdain,
And all Perſuaſions muſt be try'd in vain,
Know, that the Art of Needle-work is mine,
Who beſt can execute the great Deſign!

* The Author hopes that theſe Expreſſions are ſuitable to the Characters of the two Goddeſſes, who are here only introduced as Emblems of Modeſty and Decorum.

Who, uninſpir'd by my pretending Pow'rs,
Shall ſhape the Plan, or form the Embrio-flow'r?
True, *Venus*, with her Nymphs, an idle Train,
The Work may compaſs with an Age of Pain:
But by th' eternal Pow'rs of Heav'n I vow,
And all the *Stygian* Fiends that rule below,
By theſe, all conſcious to my firm Decree,
No kind Aſſiſtance ſhall ſhe hope from me.

Here ceas'd the Blue-ey'd Maid: A Pauſe enſu'd;
Diana next the Godhead's Grant withſtood:
Muſt *Venus* then, ſhe cries, enlarge her Reign?
Shall all the Pow'rs of Heav'n contend in vain?
Curſt Wretch! what future Woes, what new Diſgrace,
Would ſhe entail on Woman's hapleſs Race?
What Woes, what Miſ'ries hath ſhe caus'd of yore!
Ambitious Fool!—and would ſhe kindle more?
Well, I foreſee what Ills muſt hence proceed,
Ev'n Nations yet unborn will blame the Deed.
Soon Modeſty, our Sex's darling Pride,
No more will take Decorum for its Guide;
And daring Impudence at once diſgrace
The former Trophies of the Female Race.
Dreſs now is grown the Study of the Fair,
Their chiefeſt Labour, and their only Care;

Rude

Rude are their Sports, their Pleaſures unrefin'd,
No more they ſtrive to ornament the Mind.
Know, that 'tis Virtue dignifies the Grace!
And adds new Beauties to the faireſt Face;
When this and Modeſty together meet,
How bleſt the Union, and their Force how ſweet!
Coquets in vain their ſtudied Looks may dart,
True Merit only charms the Lover's Heart.
Haſte then, O *Jove!* to ſtop the ſpreading Flame,
If not for Decency, at leaſt for Shame.
At length the *Cyprian* Goddeſs thus replies,
While Indignation lightn'd in her Eyes:
Of all th' immortal Pow'rs that rule above,
But two are found inſenſible of Love:
Still *Pallas* ſpotleſs has preſerv'd her Heart,
A Virgin undeceiv'd by *Cupid*'s Art:
Diana too my ſov'reign Pow'r defies,
And all my proffer'd Sweets of Friendſhip flies.
No Wonder ſuch my Suit ſhould diſapprove,
Whoſe Breaſts are Strangers to the Joys of Love!
Love! that unloads the Mind from Cares and Strife,
And kindly waſtes ſo much of anxious Life.
Had not the magick Charms of Love took Place,
Mankind had liv'd a rude and ſavage Race:

But ſince the World is civiliz'd of late,
And poliſh'd from the Ruſt of antient Date,
How dare they thus, by ſtrong Preſumption mov'd,
To envy *Venus'* Joys they never prov'd?
Why, ſince the Gods my juſt Requeſt approve,
Will they in vain withſtand the Will of *Jove?*
Proud envious Queens! their Malice I deſcry,
And all the Rancour of their Schemes defy:
Still may my ſov'reign Rule, ordain'd by Fate,
Excite their Envy, and provoke their Hate!
Strait mingl'd Shouts of joint Acclaim ariſe,
And *Jove* diſſolves the Senate of the Skies.
Thus *Venus* triumph'd where *Minerva* fail'd,
And Beauty over Eloquence prevail'd.
Say, heav'nly Beauty, whence thy Pow'r to charm,
And Senſe and Reaſon of their Force diſarm?
Thy radiant Smiles with Pride Mankind obey,
Who gladly follow where you point the Way.
Allur'd by thee, th' immortal Gods above
Have left their Heav'n to taſte of mortal Love.
In vain, O *Merc'ry!* prov'd thy boaſted Senſe!
And, *Jove*, thy Thunder's but a weak Defence!
Strong are her Charms, when lovely Beauty pleads,
Each Heart ſhe wins, and ev'ry Wiſh ſucceeds;

Elſe how could *Venus* with deſerv'd Applauſe
Talk thus perſuaſive in ſo ſlight a Cauſe?
Pleas'd with Succeſs, from Heav'n the Goddeſs flies
On Æther's Wing, and cleaves the downward Skies;
Soon from her Sight the rolling Orbs withdrew,
And Earth's wide-ſpreading Plains appear'd in View.

CANTO III.

THUS from the Regions of the God of Day,
To *Cyprus* now the Goddeſs ſpeeds her Way;
Bleſt Iſle, where *Cupid* and his wanton Train
In ſportive Bliſs, and Pleaſures ever reign.
There to her Praiſe a thouſand Altars riſe,
And ſtretch their tow'ring Bulwarks to the Skies.
There ready ſtand her Magazines of Darts,
And all thoſe Snares that poiſon human Hearts.
There Mirtle-groves with endleſs Verdure crown'd,
And balmy Shrubs with * Citiſſus abound:
Soft Zephirs there are all the Winds that blow,
And bubbling Streams in ſoft Meanders flow;

* A Plant formerly in great Eſteem among the *Theſſalian* Women, which they frequently infuſed in their Love-Potions, or Philters.

Unnumber'd Flowrets deck each Current's Side,
And view their Beauties in the cryſtal Tide,
Whoſe purling Rills in gentle Cadence move,
And ſweetly tune the melting Soul to Love.
Retir'd amidſt theſe happy Bow'rs and Groves,
The Goddeſs finds the young Deſires and Loves.
With equal Care all ply their utmoſt Art,
And barb for bloody Deeds the miſſile Dart:
To whom with Smiles, and Accent ſoft, ſhe cries,
Ye Nymphs! I come commiſſion'd from the Skies;
Far diff'rent Toil your Queen's Requeſt demands,
Haſte! drop th' unfiniſh'd Labour from your Hands!
Lucinda, faireſt of the *Britiſh* Fair,
A Favour claims that asks your niceſt Care;
For her your greateſt Skill muſt now be ſhewn,
To raiſe an Engine ſhe may call her own.
When, lo! obedient to their Queen's Command,
The ready Nymphs in marſhall'd Order ſtand;
Now all at once in glaring Arms appear,
And graſp in eager Haſte the Needle-ſpear:
In Steel their Fingers militant are bound,
Whoſe Orb defies the pointed Jav'lin's Wound.
Theſe Arms, the Labour of the *Lemnian* God
Unſully'd, *Venus* on each Nymph beſtow'd.

So warr'd the famous *Amazons* of old,
And *Xanthus'* Stream with purple Billows roll'd,
When the mad Fury of their Maiden Queen
Drove Armies back, and ſingly clear'd the Plain.

Thus arm'd, they for th' important Task prepare,—
Collecting all their Induſtry and Care,
While *Venus* forms the Plan with wond'rous Art,
And to each Nymph aſſigns a diff'rent Part:
All Kinds of Ornament the Goddeſs brought,
Which in a thouſand various Climes ſhe ſought:
At length th' Effect of her ſucceſsful Skill,
The arduous Task is finiſh'd to her Will.

But, oh! what Strains where equal Beauties ſhine
Could celebrate the Workmanſhip divine;
The Pow'r of Verſe but ſmall Relief affords,
Or all the pompous Majeſty of Words.
The labour'd Veſt on tow'ring Columns rais'd
With tinſel'd Fringe, and rich Embroid'ry blaz'd;
Full nine long Yards the ſtiff'ning Whalebone bound
The Circle's wide Circumference around;
Due Simmetry appear'd in ev'ry Part,
Enrich'd with all the Luxury of Art.
Here ſparkling glow'd the richeſt *Tyrian* Die,
And ſoften'd Shades in fainter Order lie.

There all the Pride of Needle-work is seen
In mimic Groves to paint the *Sylvan* Scene,
Not Flower's that deck the checquer'd Plains in *May*,
Nor *Iris'* Bow more Colours can display.
—But hold presumptuous Muse! forbear to trace
Each sev'ral Beauty, and peculiar Grace!
Enough, debase not with unequal Lays
The Subject worthy of sublimer Praise!
—Now from her blest Retreat the Goddess flew,
And *Albion's* rocky Cliffs appear'd in View;
More swift than *Eurus'* angry Storms, she flies,
Or Streaks of Fire that flash along the Skies.
Now to th' appointed Place the Gift she bears,
Where wept *Lucinda*, Object of her Cares.
Deep in a dark Recess beneath the Shade,
Which *Sirius'* sultry Beams could ne'er invade,
She finds the Fair all pensive and forlorn,
With anxious Sighs expecting her Return.
To whom the Goddess thus with Look severe,
Renounce with Woman's Doubt a Woman's Fear!
Could'st thou mistrust my Mission from above,
And all the Ties of Justice and of Love?
O crush that impious and aspiring Thought!
Behold my Promise to Completion brought!

At length the Time, the deſtin'd Hour is come,
Prefixt by *Jove's* unalterable Doom;
When Man no more ſhall boaſt his impious Sway,
And teach your Sex ſo tamely to obey.
This Gift an Earneſt of my Promiſe take,
Nor think that Heav'n its Promiſe can forſake!
If *Venus'* Skill can future Truths preſage,
New rip'ning Trophies wait the riſing Age:
Ten thouſand Tongues ſhall lisp *Lucinda's* Name,
And twice ten Thouſand emulate her Fame.
Soon thy belov'd *Lyſander* ſhall adore
Thy Charms again, and own their conqu'ring Pow'r;
Vain haughty Fool! if *Venus'* Schemes ſucceed,
Soon Vengeance follows thy preſumptuous Deed!
—No more the Goddeſs ſaid, but wing'd her Way
To the bleſt Realms of everlaſting Day.
With Joy the dang'rous Gift *Lucinda* view'd,
And Smiles the Crimſon o'er each Cheek renew'd.
Long on each Part ſhe fix'd her wond'ring Sight,
And view'd the Whole with Rapture and Delight;
Much ſhe admir'd the Juſtneſs of Deſign,
The curious Texture and the Work divine:
—Meanwhile the Night involves with ſable Wings
The Landſcape round, and veils the Face of Things.

Lucinda now her downy Pillow preſt,
And the Beau-monde had ſought their balmy Reſt;
Nor Lap-dog's Voice was heard, nor human Sound,
But unmoleſted Silence reign'd around.

When, lo! deſcending from the Fields of Air
Her Guardian * *Sylph* attends the ſleeping Fair;
Unſeen ſhe comes, ſo Heav'n and Fate allows,
To warn the charming Nymph of future Woes:
Now hov'ring 'round her Head, her Lips ſhe lay
Full cloſe her Ear, and thus was thought to ſay.

Do Sleep's ſoft Bands detain my beauteous Fair,
Supreme of Women, Heav'n's peculiar Care?
If e'er thy Boſom entertain'd one Thought
Of Fairy Tales by antient Matron taught;
How airy Forms in *Arthur*'s Days were ſeen
In circling Rings to gambol o'er the Green,
While full-orb'd *Luna* with her Silver Light
Smil'd on the Train, and lengthen'd out the Night.
Know --- that we Natives of the ætherial Plain
Still o'er the World extend our wide Domain;
O'er Balls and Birth-night Meetings we preſide,
Crown the gay Pomp, and all their Actions guide.

* The *Sylphs* are a Kind of Aereal Spirits, compoſed of the pureſt Atoms of the Air, and greatly held in Veneration among the antient Poets. —— See their Nature and Qualities deſcribed in the Hiſtory of Count *de Gabalis*, or Mr. *Pope*'s Dedication to his *Rape of the Lock*.

Aided by us, your Sex ſecurely move
Through all the mazy Labyrinths of Love:
Still where the circling Nymphs their Charms diſplay,
And ſip from *Hebe*'s Hand their darling Tea,
Unſeen we hover round on Wings of Air,
And guard from rude Alarms each wanton Fair.
Learn hence 'tis Love compels me to declare
Sad Truths, unwelcome to a Virgin's Ear:
Ah, Nymph! a Deity provok'd to Spleen,
For thee prepares ſome Vengeance yet unſeen;
Not all our Skill the Secret can unfold
Deep in the Leaves of Fate's dark Volume roll'd.
--- But ſtill receive this Solace of thy Woe,
'Tis all thou canſt expect, or we beſtow:
Toward the Stroke, our Art ſhall be apply'd,
And all our watchful Induſtry employ'd.
Soon all the Squadrons of the lower Sky
In ſwarming Myriads to thy Aid ſhall fly;
To all, their diff'rent Tasks ſhall be aſſign'd,
To ſome, the Care and Conduct of thy Mind;
While others guard the Ringlets of thy Hair,
Taught by * *Belinda*'s Suff'ring to beware:
Some ſhall th' enamell'd Fan and Snuff-box keep,
And tend thy fav'rite *Chloe* while aſleep.

* Alluding to Mr. *Pope*'s *Rape of the Lock*.

Full twenty Legions of no vulgar Note
Shall guard from rude Alarms the Petticoat;
What, tho' the fev'nfold Shield with Ribs of Whale
Encloſe thy Limbs within the circling Mail,
Unguarded it may prove a weak Support
When hoſtile Pow'rs beſiege the brittle Fort.
Who knows but artful *Venus* may deceive
Her thoughtleſs Dupe too ready to believe:
Perhaps this Gift ſhe has beſtow'd of late,
May prove in Time the Object of thy Hate:
Which Heav'n avert! ye guardian Angels ſpare
Your darling Nymph! if Woman is your Care.
— Here ceas'd the *Sylph*, on *Æther*'s Pinion born
To Fields of Air ſhe ſhapes her ſwift Return.

CANTO IV.

NOW had the Sun with new-returning Light
Expell'd the ſable Shades of gloomy Night,
When grateful Birds began their Thanks to pay,
And hail with warbling Hymns the dawning Day.
Mean while *Lucinda* leaves her roſeate Bed,
And all the phantom Dreams of Fancy fled.

Impatient now her Conquests to display,
And reap the Honours of th' important Day,
In eager Haste she to her Toilet moves,
And ev'ry Charm with added Grace improves;
Her Maids around obedient to her Will,
With equal Care exert their utmost Skill:
Here Files of Pins like some well-order'd Band
In marshall'd Ranks of equal Distance stand:
Here rich Brocades with sparkling Brilliants glow,
And there in Curls her wanton Tresses flow;
Her Breasts beneath transparent Muslins swell,
Betraying Charms, they safer might conceal:
Each Fault the fair One in her Glass repairs,
And practises a Thousand killing Airs;
Each Look, each Gesture she refines with Toil,
And learns with Art to force the studied Smile.
Encompass'd now within her sev'nfold Shield,
The Female Warrior issues to the Field,
Full nine long Yards the vast Rotund display'd,
The brilliant Lustre of the rich Brocade.
So great *Pelides* thunder'd o'er the Plain,
And heap'd the Ground with Mountains of the Slain:
Not half the Numbers to his Sword did yield,
Nor half so large the Orbit of his Shield.

At *Hyde-Park* Circus now ſurvey the Fair,
While Beaux and Belles attend her Preſence there;
Venus with Grace divine her Form improves,
And gazing Crowds admire her as ſhe moves.
Thus on *Eurota*'s Banks, or *Daunia*'s Plain,
The Huntreſs-Queen leads forth her active Train;
High on her Shoulder hangs the Silver Bow,
And her looſe Locks in gentle Motion flow;
Her ſtately Walk diſplays her heav'nly Mien,
Supreme ſhe moves, and looks at large their Queen.
Not leſs admir'd *Lucinda* paſs'd along,
And drew the Wonder of th' applauding Throng:
Ten thouſand Eyes were fixt on her alone,
While meaner Beauties innocently ſhone.
So glowing *Phœbus* with too pow'rful Light
Outſhines the Stars, and puts their Beams to Flight.

Now with her hundred Tongues, the Trump of Fame
To Parts remote had ſpread *Lucinda*'s Name;
Loud rung her Praiſe of ev'ry Beau the Boaſt,
The Woman's Envy, and the Lover's Toaſt.
Now diſtant Tea-Tables with great Applauſe
'Gainſt hoſtile Tongues eſpous'd *Lucinda*'s Cauſe;
Strange, where fell Scandal, and Detraction breeds,
And at each Word ſome Reputation bleeds,

That each young Hoyden with one common Voice
Should praiſe her Judgment, and applaud her Choice.
Yet ev'ry Female ſpeaks *Lucinda*'s Praiſe,
And to the fav'rite Name due Honour pays:
Ev'n rural Nymphs forſake their Groves and Woods,
Thy Walks, O *Barbi* and long frequented Floods,
Who 'round the beauteous Nymph all gazing ſtand,
And praiſe the Work, but more the Artiſt's Hand.

But ſee how various are the Turns of Fate!
On ſublunary Bliſs what Changes wait!
Now falls the Fury of *Diana*'s Rage,
Whoſe hot Reſentment nothing could aſſwage,
Sad Ills unſeen enſue at her Command,
And Vengeance glows for Modeſty profan'd.

Avaro once, as antient Records ſay,
Prepar'd to celebrate ſome feſtal Day;
There met the Flow'r of Youth, and 'mongſt the reſt
Lucinda came, an ever welcome Gueſt:
Not all the Omens of the former Day,
Nor nightly Viſions cou'd engage her Stay;
Thrice as to go th' unhappy Nymph eſſay'd,
Some guardian Pow'r unſeen her Steps delay'd;
Thrice with tremendous Scream from out his Cage
Prophetic *Poll* expreſs'd his inmoſt Rage;

Thrice *Pug* disorder'd shook his brazen Chain,
And strange Convulsions seiz'd the Creature's Brain.
Vain Cares, alas! a Woman's settl'd Mind
No Rules can alter, and no Force can bind.
Thus to th' appointed Place *Lutinda* came,
The op'ning Valves admit the radiant Dame.
With Mirth and Joy the pompous Dome resounds,
And all the vary'd Melody of Sounds.
Nocturnal Lamps their mingl'd Beams display,
Whose glaring Rays outshone the Face of Day:
And now in Act to form the mazy Dance,
In marshall'd Ranks the coupl'd Pairs advance;
But, oh! what Mortal can be too secure
From the ill-natur'd Frowns of Fortune's Pow'r?
As round the Room the flutt'ring Wanton flew,
And Chairs and Tables in her Haste o'erthrew;
Down from a neighbouring Heighth with dreadful Sound
Huge China Vessels iss'd on the Ground,
Here Jars and Tea-Cups mingl'd with the Slain,
And spread their brittle Honours on the Plain,
Doom'd now no more to touch *Amanda*'s Lips,
And from her Mouth receive ambrosial Sips;
Lost ever now is that enchanting Scene
So late at Visits eminently seen

Not all *Amanda*'s Care, nor guardian Pow'r,
Could ought avail them in that dreadful Hour.
There lay the Fragments of an ample Bowl,
The only Comfort of *Avaro*'s Soul;
Ordain'd at laſt its deſtin'd Fate to meet,
It fell a Victim at *Lucinda*'s Feet:
Once much admir'd for its capacious Size,
See where the Uſeful, and the Beauteous lies!
That now no more ſhall raiſe the mirthful Jeſt,
Or gently ſooth intruding Cares to Reſt.
Ah! hapleſs Wretch am I, *Avaro* cries,
And lifts aloft to Heav'n his Hands and Eyes:
O murd'rous Deed! O Inſtrument accurſt!
Of all Inventions thou art ſure the worſt!
Henceforth may Calumny degrade thy Fame,
And blaſt the Glory of thy riſing Name!
—Mean while new Love *Lyſander*'s Boſom warms,
Well pleas'd he hears *Lucinda*'s boaſted Charms;
Her former Love and preſent Fame conſpire
To raiſe the Flame, and fan the growing Fire.
At length the Lover burns to meet the Fair,
And both their Breaſts an equal Paſſion ſhare:
Dreſt out like modern Beaux for Birth-night Ball,
His Locks in Ringlets on his Shoulders fall;

His Sword with ſparkling Gems diverſify'd
For Ornament hung idly by his Side.
—'Twas Noon of Day, the Chariot of the Sun
Had half the Progreſs of his Circuit run;
When faint and languid with the Summer's Heat
Lucinda ſought the Garden's cool Retreat;
And 'midſt the verdant Walks, and tufted Bow'rs,
Alone beguil'd the Leaden-footed Hours.
Thither, ſo *Venus* wills, *Lyſander* came
To ſeek the lovely Object of his Flame.
Ye Gods! what Pen could paint the Nymph's Surprize,
When on the dear Ingrate ſhe fix'd her Eyes!
But he, the happy Minutes to improve,
Well vers'd in all the artful Springs of Love,
With double Force his former Flame renews,
And all the melting Words that Lovers uſe.
At length he diſſipates her Virgin Fears,
And ev'ry Doubt with ſtrong Perſuaſion clears;
And now more ſtrongly to enforce his Flame,
In ſofteſt Accents he addreſs'd the Dame.
Why thus alone, my charming Fair! he cries,
Averſe from *Venus*, and all youthful Joys?
When Pleaſure courts thee, canſt thou linger here?
Charms great as thine have grac'd a nobler Sphere:

Or art thou, conſcious of thoſe Charms, ſo kind
To hide their Beams in Pity to Mankind?
Long has my Boſom own'd their killing Pow'r,
Since firſt I knew thee to this happy Hour;
O chaſe this melancholy Gloom away!
Let's go where Pleaſure paints the flow'ry Way!
In Youth alone we hapleſs Mortals live,
But ſhort the longeſt Bleſſings it can give;
Conſuming Time is ever on its Way,
Soon Love ſhall ceaſe, and Beauty will decay.
In this unguarded Hour, the Queen of Love
Commiſſions *Cupid* from the Realms above.
The wily God with his accuſtom'd Art
Diſcharg'd the poiſ'nous Arrow thro' his Heart.
[illegible] Godhead ruſh'd upon his Soul,
[illegible]e's ſoft Fires his ſick'ning Eye-balls roll;
Whoſe languid Beams appear'd like humid Light,
Such as divides the Wane of Day and Night,
Or falling Stars whoſe dying Fires decay,
Or pale-ey'd *Cynthia* at the Noon of Day.
Thus *Venus* triumphs o'er her conquer'd Slave
Diſarm'd, and impotent his Heart to ſave
Love lights the lambent Flame within his Breaſt,
That all his nobler Sentiments ſuppreſs'd;

In ev'ry Vein he feels the glowing Fire,
And burns at length impatient with Deſire.
In *Hymen*'s pleaſing Bonds the Pair unite,
And mutual Tranſport crown'd the nuptial Rite.

Thus has the Muſe, ye *Britiſh* Beauties! ſung
The Source from whence the Hoop's Production ſprung,
To you alone ſhe dedicates the Song,
To you the Poet and the Strains belong!
For you all Nature in her youthful Spring
Exulting haſtes her earlieſt Wreaths to bring;
For you th' *Italian* Worm her Silk prepares,
And diſtant *India* ſends her richeſt Wares!
---Then may your beauteous Charms, by Heav'n deſign'd
To bleſs the World, ſtill triumph o'er Mankind!
Proceed to conquer with unbounded Sway,
And teach Man's ſtubborn Race with Pleaſure to obey.

F I N I S.